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FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

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FIRST COMMITTEE
25th meeting
held on
Monday, 5 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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- Consideration of and action on all disarmament agenda items (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. MORENO (Italy): I wish to make some comments, on behalf of the twelve Member States of the European Community, on item 56 (l) of the agenda, concerning the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

The Twelve have repeatedly demonstrated their determination to pursue and support any endeavour to strengthen the role of the United Nations in promoting disarmament, mutual confidence, and international peace and security. The United Nations is the key forum for world-wide discussion of all problems related to the pursuance of the objectives of international peace and security. The Twelve are convinced that the United Nations must play a central role in the quest for disarmament; its moral and political authority has recently been reinforced by the increased awareness of the international community's need for an institution capable of taking effective collective measures to prevent and remove threats to the peace, and to ensure that international law is applied.

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

The newly acquired effectiveness and cohesion of the United Nations bring new hope for positive developments in all the various fields of multilateral co-operation and, from this standpoint, in the field of disarmament, which plays an essential role in the efforts to create enduring peace and security. These efforts not only should be responsive to events, but should also be aimed at having a positive influence by improving the prospects for international peace and security.

The Twelve consider that the First Committee should continue to be the principal organ of the General Assembly entrusted with the consideration of disarmament and related questions of international security. In this respect, the Twelve support and favour the continued search for ways of fully implementing the recommendations included in resolution 42/42 N, of 30 November 1987, on the rationalization of the work of the First Committee. I should like also to express our support for your personal efforts, Mr. Chairman, with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of our work and improving methods and procedures.

As a consequence, the Twelve continue to believe that the First Committee should aim at achieving results in terms of quality rather than quantity, focusing on the search for formulas which would gradually draw positions closer, with the aim of favouring consensus.

At the 1990 session the Disarmament Commission was able to prove how effective the improvement of its working methods can be in facilitating the adoption of a number of recommendations by consensus, including the recommendation on the review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We confirm our commitment to the reform process under way and believe that the United Nations Disarmament Commission should play a constructive role as a deliberative forum for debate and in-depth study on many arms control and disarmament issues.

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

The Twelve are aware of the need to implement urgently those reform measures relating in particular to the agenda. They strongly favour efforts aimed at facilitating consultations on this question before the beginning of the organizational session scheduled for December 1990. The Twelve expect a single consensus draft resolution on the United Nations Disarmament Commission to be presented for adoption at our present session as further recognition of the renewed importance attached to the role of this body.

The Twelve stress their support for the Conference on Disarmament, since it is the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body in the framework of the United Nations. The Conference remains an indispensable forum in the disarmament field.

Apart from the special importance we attach to the negotiations currently under way on a global ban on chemical weapons, we consider that valuable activity has been carried out on other agenda items, in particular through the resumption during the 1990 session of the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on a nuclear-test ban.

The Twelve are also satisfied with the efforts being carried out by its members aimed at improvement of the functioning of the Conference on Disarmament, since they are aware of the need to adapt it to the new challenges emerging on the international scene. All the delegations which participated in the consultations acknowledged that they had been positive and constructive and were a proof of the Conference's wish to improve its functioning and continue close monitoring of further developments on the issue. Although some concrete results have already been achieved with regard, inter alia, to the revision of its calendar, further consultations are to be expected during the 1991 session of the Conference.

The Twelve also recognize the valuable assistance provided by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in co-ordinating the activities of the relevant United Nations bodies, which should benefit further from the strengthening of its role.

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

The Twelve regard the studies conducted by the United Nations as very useful and instrumental to the more advanced consideration of various aspects of disarmament and to the achievement of a greater general awareness of the subject. Such activities should, in our view, continue.

In this connection, the Twelve welcome the outcome of the studies, respectively, on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification and on nuclear armaments, which were concluded by a document approved by consensus. They also express their satisfaction with the progress made by the ad hoc group entrusted by the Secretary-General with the study on international transfers of conventional arms.

Lastly, the Twelve also wish to express their appreciation of the valuable research carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and of the programme of fellowships on matters of disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Austria, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.46.

Mr. JANDL (Austria): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution (A/C.1/45/L.46), entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and preparations for the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention". I do so on behalf of the 58 sponsors, namely, the delegations of Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian SSR, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal,

(Mr. Jandl, Austria)

Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Togo, Turkey, the Ukrainian SSR, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire and my own country, Austria.

Since my delegation had the honour to present its views on the question of bacteriological weapons in general and the biological weapons Convention in particular in its rather comprehensive statement of 29 October 1990, I shall not go into the details of the matter as such, but will merely concentrate on the draft resolution at hand.

As representatives are aware, since Austria presided over the Second Review Conference of the biological weapons Convention, in 1986, it has always introduced the relevant draft resolution in the First Committee. This year also we have, together with the Australian and the Dutch delegations, prepared the draft resolution, which builds mainly upon the text of last year's resolution 44/115 C, which was adopted by consensus by the General Assembly on 15 December 1989.

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(Mr. Jandl, Austria)

The preambular part of the draft resolution, which remains basically unchanged, recalls the fact that the General Assembly, in 1971, commended the biological weapons Convention, takes note of the confidence-building measures agreed upon at the Second Review Conference, acknowledges the need that further consideration be given to the implementation of the Convention, and finally confirms the common interest in strengthening the authority of the Convention and co-operation among Member States.

In operative paragraph 1, the draft resolution reflects the outcome of the formal meeting of 23 October 1990 of the States parties to the Convention. In the light of the request by the majority of States parties to hold a Third Review Conference in 1991, the said meeting decided to convene a preparatory committee, open to all States parties, at Geneva from 8 to 12 April 1991. Just for the sake of information, I should add that the said meeting of 23 October also reached an informal understanding that the Third Review Conference itself would take place at Geneva from 9 to 27 September 1991. This date and the venue have, of course, to be decided upon formally by the preparatory committee.

Operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to provide such services as may be necessary for the Review Conference and its preparation.

In operative paragraph 3 the text recalls the decision of the Second Review Conference that the Third Review Conference should consider, inter alia, the issues set out in article XII of the Final Declaration of the Second Review Conference.

The draft resolution further addresses a very important confidence- and security-building measure that was agreed upon by the Second Review Conference, namely, the exchange of information. It reiterates its call upon all States parties to participate in this undertaking and asks the Secretary-General to lend his assistance in this matter.

(Mr. Jandl, Austria)

In its final paragraph the draft resolution calls upon all States that are not yet parties to the Convention to ratify it or accede to it without delay.

I should like to express my delegation's gratitude to the delegations of Australia and the Netherlands for their helpful advice and co-operation in the drafting of the text. I should, furthermore, emphasize our gratitude to the 57 delegations that I mentioned at the outset of my intervention as having found themselves in a position to sponsor the draft resolution, thereby providing most valuable support.

My delegation, together with the 57 other sponsors, is convinced that the text of this draft resolution is a suitable, encouraging and propitious one. I therefore express the hope that the First Committee will adopt the draft resolution, as it has adopted similar draft resolutions in previous years, without a vote.

Mr. AL-NASSER (Qatar) (interpretation from Arabic): Since my delegation is taking the floor for the first time in this Committee, allow me on behalf of my delegation to extend to you our congratulations on your election, and I also wish to congratulate the members of the Bureau on their election. I am sure that your experience and knowledge will ensure the success of the Committee's work.

I shall take up the subject of the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. Today, that question is of particular importance for several reasons. Among those reasons is the fact that the general situation with regard to disarmament gives reason for hope that considerable progress will be achieved in that area, thanks to the international détente which has paved the way towards an understanding between blocs and groups of States which, only yesterday, were living in a state of perpetual confrontation. Another reason is the eruption of the Gulf crisis, which has demonstrated the great importance of freeing the Middle East of the nuclear threat.

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

While international détente has led to the extinguishing of hotbeds of tension in various parts and regions of the world, the Middle East is going in the opposite direction. The longstanding Arab-Israeli conflict is today far from resolution or settlement. The new confrontation in the Arab Gulf is aggravating the rampant tensions in the region. Just exactly as the Secretary-General stated in the introduction to his report concerning the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East in document A/45/435,

> "A nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East most certainly deserves such a qualification for more than one reason. The most obvious of them is that the Middle East is politically still unsettled and militarily volatile."

Every year since 1974, the General Assembly has recommended, and very often unanimously, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Those recommendations included fundamental provisions whereby all the parties directly involved in the conflict were called upon to look into the taking of all practical and urgent measures necessary for the implementation of the proposal relating to the establishment of such a region and to declare, until such a region is established, that they will desist from producing, acquiring or possessing nuclear weapons. They were also called upon not to allow any third party to place nuclear weapons on their territory, and were urged to place all their nuclear installations under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to declare their acceptance of the establishment of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone and to deposit their declarations with the Security Council for consideration by the Council.

The consecutive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly included provisions and conditions which continue to be fundamental prerequisites for the establishment of such a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. However, we all know the circumstances of the region which stem from the Arab-Israeli conflict.

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

More specifically, they stem not only from the possession by Israel of a nuclear capability but also from the actual possession by Israel of nuclear weapons. The information that is available to all from numerous sources establishes those facts. The policy of silence regarding the possession by Israel of nuclear weapons does not mean that Israel does not possess those weapons. Indeed, all the experts are categorical on considering that Israel is without a doubt a nuclear State. Consequently, Israel is the source of a threat that has no place in the Middle East, if we wish that that region should meet the requirements of becoming a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Israel has two reactors: one is under the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and subject to the Agency's inspection procedures. However, the other, namely the famous Dimona reactor, whose secret was divulged by the Israeli technician Vanunu to The Sunday Times of London two years ago, is not subject to international inspection. According to the international information available, that reactor is the source of the materials from which Israel manufactures its nuclear weapons. As the Secretary-General also states in his aforementioned report, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East requires that all nuclear installations in the region be placed under the appropriate international safeguards, either through accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty or the conclusion of a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

This applies only to Israel since all the other States in the region with nuclear installations have already placed their facilities under IAEA safeguards. All the States parties that are expected to be members of the zone, with the exception of four States, are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The four States excepted are the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Oman and Mauritania.

My delegation, which has consistently supported the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones because of the contribution that that makes to the process of disarmament in general and nuclear disarmament in particular, fully supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. At the same time, however, my delegation is aware of the difficulties surrounding the establishment of such a zone and arising from Israel's nuclear armament and its refusal to place its nuclear facilities under the IAEA safeguards as is required for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the area.

We are all well aware of the positions of the parties concerned with regard to the establishment of such a zone and we know that as long as there is no fundamental change in the circumstances of the region, in other words, unless Israel accedes to the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and places its installations under the IAEA safeguards and thereby respects its international obligations and responsibilities, the project will remain a dead letter.

The Secretary-General's report on the establishment of the zone deserves our serious consideration. Allow me to express the great appreciation of my country for the Secretary-General's efforts in drawing up this report. The report now shows us, after so many years, the approach to take to find a solution to the problem and to achieve the final goal, namely, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

(Mr. Al-Nasser, Qatar)

We are aware of the limits of the report and know full well that the establishment of such a zone is a political act that depends on the parties which will make up the zone when it is created. However, the report includes certain proposals and measures, elements which, if adopted, would allow us to achieve that goal. Those elements of the report shed light on certain problems and issues involved in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone while taking into account the specific circumstances of the Middle East.

We also wish to thank all the experts for their efforts aimed at clarifying some of the problems. This is a step towards achieving the ultimate goal, which is to contribute to nuclear disarmament and to consolidate security and peace throughout the world.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Germany, who will introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.13 and A/C.1/45/L.36.

Mr. RITTER von WAGNER (Germany): I have the honour to introduce two draft resolutions today, and I shall do so one after the other.

First, I should like to speak today on agenda item 60 (g) and introduce, on behalf of the delegations of Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Romania, Spain, Togo, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and my own delegation, draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.36, entitled "Implementation of the guidelines for appropriate types of confidence-building measures".

Two years ago, in its resolution 43/78 H, the General Assembly endorsed without a vote the guidelines for confidence-building measures that had been worked

(Mr. Ritter von Wagner, Germany)

out by the Disarmament Commission. These guidelines are a standing invitation to all States of the world to implement such measures on a global or regional level. A review of developments over the past two years leads us to conclude that this invitation has been accepted and that the guidelines have been implemented by a great number of States all over the world. Confidence-building measures have proved to be of increasing importance. This is particularly true for confidence-building measures agreed and implemented on a bilateral, subregional or regional level. Let me give the Committee some examples.

In Africa confidence-building measures are being developed in the framework of the Organization of African Unity as well as between the States members of the Economic Communities of Central African and Western African States. In reviewing the last two years mention must be made of the signing in 1989 of the Treaty instituting the Arab Maghreb Union. It represents a major step towards enhancing stability and co-operation in the Maghreb area and building confidence among the States members of the Union.

Among Asian nations the confidence-building process is gaining ground and becoming more specific. Two recent examples of particular importance are the establishment of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation and, especially, the 1989 agreement between India and Pakistan on non-attack upon each other's nuclear facilities.

In Latin America the value of confidence-building measures has been long recognized. In 1989 the five countries members of the Andean Pact agreed in their Galapagos Declaration on the undertaking to institute or improve confidence-building measures aimed at the establishment of practical procedures, including: prompt bilateral consultations for avoiding or resolving frontier

(Mr. Ritter von Wagner, Germany)

incidents; the exchange of information and regular meetings between their armed forces, including meetings at the level of their military high commands; and co-operation by their armed forces in development projects of mutual interest.

This agreement represents a major effort for confidence building in the region. Argentina and Brazil took the political decision to promote and expand their economic integration and intensify their peaceful nuclear co-operation on the basis of openness and mutual confidence. In the General Assembly Argentina has launched an initiative for confidence-building measures in outer space.

As to developments in Europe, I may refer to draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.37, with France as one of its sponsors, entitled "Confidence- and security-building measures and conventional disarmament in Europe". The United Nations has been playing a crucial role in the process of promoting the concept of confidence-building measures and analysing appropriate measures for different regions or subregions in the world. This year's United Nations meetings on confidence- and security-building measures in Asia - in Kathmandu, Nepal - and on conflict resolution, crisis prevention and management and confidence-building among African States - in Arusha, Tanzania - contributed significantly to focusing attention on confidence-building measures appropriate to and practicable in the respective regions.

(Mr. Ritter von Wagner, Germany)

As laid down in the 1989 guidelines, confidence-building measures are conceived of as a broad concept. Confidence reflects a set of related factors of a military as well as of a non-military character, and a plurality of approaches is needed to overcome fear, apprehension and mistrust between States and to replace them with confidence. This includes confidence building in the political, military, economic, social, humanitarian and cultural fields. At the same time, confidence-building measures in the military field alone are already of high value and should be a focus of our attention.

Traditionally, sovereign States have pursued their security autonomously either on their own or in conjunction with close allies, but rarely by trying to co-operate with potential adversaries in fields relating to security. Times are changing. Today States are discovering, without in any way renouncing sovereignty, that national security can also be bolstered by measures taken, not against, but in co-operation with, potential adversaries. In this regard, confidence-building measures are of particular relevance. Disarmament agreements cannot materialize overnight. They require a high degree of co-operation in the field of security, which necessitates a solid basis of antecedent co-operative efforts to build trust. Like no other means, confidence-building measures are capable of performing this task. By breaking the pernicious cycle of distrust, arms build-up and tension by substituting a new cycle of understanding, confidence and stability, they pave the way for new co-operative structures of security, among which arms reduction agreements will figure prominently.

In applying this line of thinking, States of the two major military alliances have already succeeded in transforming their relationship to an extent that would have been inconceivable only a few years ago. In their London Declaration, Heads of State and Government of the North Atlantic Council made it clear that they no

(Mr. Ritter von Wagner, Germany)

longer regarded the Soviet Union and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe as adversaries but as fellow architects of the new Europe to which they extended the hand of friendship, and they proposed that co-operation within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe be institutionalized in order to provide a forum for broad political dialogue in a more united Europe.

Let me reaffirm that wherever disarmament and arms control are at issue in the world it must be borne in mind that confidence building paves the way to disarmament, and in turn disarmament generates confidence. This cycle of reason should be set in motion world wide.

I would like now to introduce the second draft resolution, on "Science and technology for disarmament", contained in document A/C.1/45/L.13. For technical reasons this draft has been introduced without listing all the countries that wish to join in sponsoring it. We are grateful for the support given us and would welcome the broadest sponsorship possible for an item which, in our view, deserves particular attention. The draft resolution calls in essence for increased common efforts to make the best possible use of those scientific and technological achievements that improve the tools for the effective and reliable implementation of arms control and disarmament agreements, inter alia, for verification of compliance and for weapons disposal.

My delegation maintains the view that technology as such is neutral and that, although it has a momentum of its own, its use and development occur only under human direction. With human guidance, technology can and should be a crucial element in the effort to establish a new, more co-operative stage in international relations. The better use and application of technological means and methods related to arms control and disarmament in mutual and collective co-operation

(Mr. Ritter von Wagner, Germany)

constitute a desirable and indispensable step in this regard. In order to exploit to the full the potential of technology and arms control as agents for positive change, we deem it important to give this interrelationship special attention. My Government wishes to do this by taking into account the individual characteristics of efforts related to arms control and disarmament, such as treaty-specific verification provisions, noting the difficulties in assigning specific responsibilities to a multilateral organization not directly related to a specific arms control endeavour. The aspect of science and technology deserves particular attention, best expressed by broad sponsorship. It would be very much welcomed if delegations that feel the same way would express this feeling by joining in sponsoring our draft resolution. We welcome any support for this draft.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Mexico, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.33.

Mrs. CARVALHO (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects has been the subject of many international activities and, despite the fact that there is an awareness that these weapons are imperilling the existence of mankind, very little has been done to eliminate them from the face of the Earth.

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.33, entitled "Nuclear-arms freeze" - namely, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Peru and Mexico - continue to be convinced of the urgency of putting an end to the perfecting of nuclear weapons, deeming this an indispensable measure for curbing the nuclear-arms race. The qualitative improvement of these weapons neutralizes the positive effects of the agreements on weapons reduction inasmuch as there continues to be an increase in the destructive capacity of the remaining weaponry.

(Mrs. Carvalho, Mexico)

Improvements in East-West relations should encourage and speed up the process leading to the adoption of concrete measures to ensure the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution, an urgent appeal is addressed to the two major nuclear Powers to reach agreement on an immediate nuclear-arms freeze, which would provide for a stoppage of any further production and, at the same time, a cut-off in the production of fissionable material for their manufacture.

Although this measure is not an end in and of itself, we are convinced that joint action on the part of nuclear-weapon States committing them to a total nuclear-arms freeze would contribute to enhancing the confidence of States and would create a more favourable and secure international atmosphere.

(Mrs. Carvalho, Mexico)

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.33 again appeal to the nuclear-weapon States to announce a total nuclear-weapon freeze in a declaration that would include the prohibition of testing, production and emplacement of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles, as well as the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for such weapons.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Colombia, who will introduce the draft decision contained in document A/C.1/45/L.3.

Miss URIBE DE LOZAN (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): I have the honour to introduce the draft decision regarding agenda item 56 (j) of the General Assembly, concerning international arms transfers.

The draft decision, contained in document A/C.1/45/L.3, is designed simply to include the item concerning international arms transfers on the provisional agenda of the General Assembly at the next session, when the report on the study that is currently being made on all aspects relating to this very important issue will be submitted to Governments for their consideration.

However, I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to express our pleasure at noting the growing awareness on the part of many Governments concerning the problem of international arms transfers, as indicated not only in the debates at this session of the General Assembly but also in the replies they have sent to the Secretary-General.

There can be no doubt any longer that the matter of international arms transfers gives rise to many and various concerns in the international community: the current crisis in the Middle East; the destabilizing role of conventional weapons; the increasing impoverishment of the third world; the external debt of many countries, to a large extent attributable to militarization; and the constantly increasing violence in some areas of the world are only a few of the factors related to the arms trade.

(Miss Uribe De Lozan, Colombia)

It is increasingly obvious today that peoples want peace, that they prefer methods other than war to resolve their disputes, and that weapons not only have not solved their problems but have impoverished them and, in many cases, future generations. It is time for the limiting of arms transfers to become a shared responsibility in our efforts to bring about global security and to internationalize disarmament. It is time to understand that there is a tremendous potential for the increasing of resources devoted to human development through curbing and reducing arms transfers.

If crises serve any purpose, it is to jolt our consciences. The crisis we are experiencing is sufficient, as we said a few days ago, to make us take stock, move towards reflection and change, and make a serious effort to curb the production of weapons, eliminate the unscrupulous trade in them and put an end to the utilitarian mentality that has caused the current situation.

For those of us in the United Nations that have assumed responsibilities with regard to international arms transfers, either as co-sponsors of the relevant resolutions or as participants in the group of governmental experts currently studying the item, all the opinions expressed so far constitute a valuable contribution to this consideration and also an important stimulus for the complex work we have undertaken.

We should like also to avail ourselves of this opportunity to thank the Secretariat for its invaluable support and advice in this undertaking.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.

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General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

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FIRST COMMITTEE
26th meeting
held on
Monday, 5 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 26th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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- Consideration of and action on all disarmament agenda items (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Sri Lanka, who will introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.17 and A/C.1/45/L.10.

Mr. RASAPUTRAM (Sri Lanka): Before introducing draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.17 and A/C.1/45/L.10, I would like to state that there are five additional sponsors for draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.17. They are: the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nigeria, the Sudan, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

We are all agreed that outer space belongs to all mankind and that its use exclusively for peaceful purposes would enhance the welfare of all. The peaceful use of outer space can be hampered by the arms race in outer space. It is generally acknowledged that an arms race in outer space could destroy the foundation that has been laid in recent years in the field of disarmament and would jeopardize the efforts that are being made to achieve general and complete disarmament under international control. Undeniably, issues of arms control in outer space have to be seen in the context of their significance in relation to international stability, peace and security. Collective efforts are required to prevent an arms race in outer space so that the current trends in the strengthening of peace and security may be continued with vigour and enthusiasm and so that no new divisive elements may be allowed to complicate the process.

It has been made clear over the past years that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and that the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out for the benefit of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic and scientific development, and that such exploration and use should be for peaceful purposes. It is also important to note the number of resolutions adopted on this subject over the years and in many forums, underlining the urgency

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

of preventing an arms race in outer space. In this context, we may also recall the Declaration adopted by the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Belgrade from 4 to 7 September 1989 and General Assembly resolution 44/112 of 15 December 1989, which those countries sponsored.

The issues relating to outer space have remained identifiable and recognizable, but the amount of attention given to this important proposal for the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been inadequate. The dangers involved as a result of the arms race can and should be prevented before they get out of control. The time has come to go beyond the desire to regulate and limit military activity in outer space so that practical and concrete measures can be undertaken to implement decisions to prevent an arms race in outer space. Undoubtedly, the main objective is to achieve durable peace and security and to utilize the scarce resources thus released for the benefit of mankind in peaceful pursuits.

The developments in improved relationships, particularly with the two super-Powers, which possess the most advanced space technology, tend to augur well for the future. The positive developments that have taken place recently must not be allowed to falter through any kind of intransigence on the part of anyone.

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

We should seize opportunities that are afforded to utilize all potentialities to the fullest extent possible to prevent an arms race in outer space. Another significant positive development is that it has been possible to conduct meaningful consultations with the co-ordinators of other groups so as to allow one draft resolution to emerge from such consultations and negotiations.

The delegations sponsoring the draft resolution are convinced that this can facilitate agreements leading to strategic stability through space activities and their interrelationship with arms control and other issues related to space and complete disarmament. We are aware that the Ad Hoc Committee, in 1990, made qualitative improvements, in that the conclusions which were adopted by consensus included certain useful elements. It was clear that most countries that have space assets wanted some kind of multilateral action to ensure the absence of hostile action through the weaponization of space. We believe that the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee at the beginning of the 1991 session of the Conference on Disarmament will ensure that every effort is made in the continuation and intensification of substantive work on this issue.

On behalf of all the sponsors, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.17, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The draft resolution is a product of consultations and negotiations with the other groups, which culminated in the submission of a single draft text, thus assisting you, Mr. Chairman, in your efforts to rationalize the work of the Committee. The draft resolution is therefore a compromise resolution which takes into consideration the views of all groups.

There have been a few changes in the preambular paragraphs. Many of those changes are either technical or editorial and are directed towards combining some of the paragraphs to achieve brevity without affecting their meaning or intentions. These variations from last year's draft resolution have been limited

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

to areas in which we believe general agreement to be possible as they reflect a realistic approach to this complex problem. Substantive changes have been made in a spirit of compromise to address this item in a pragmatic and concrete manner. Substantive additions are kept to a minimum and are taken from the consensus language of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, which was established by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. In this context, it may be stated that the relevance of considering measures on confidence-building and greater transparency and openness with regard to space has been emphasized in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. Confidence-building measures are essential to increase and strengthen mutual trust on all disarmament matters.

The sponsors approached this item in the spirit of co-operation that is essential to working out solutions to this complex issue in a pragmatic and practical way. The draft resolution is consistent with the views expressed by most members at the meetings of this year's Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The sponsors would have preferred a strong draft resolution, but it was felt that a compromise text would lead to the attainment of positive results by gaining a greater degree of support from delegations. In addition, we believe that the adoption of this draft resolution would enhance the ability of all Member States to generate a productive environment that would enable them to undertake work on outer space for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of mankind, with the least amount of delay. We hope that it will be possible to build a consensus on this single draft resolution.

My delegation was associated with the delegations of Egypt and Venezuela in the initiative aimed at producing a compromise text. We are hopeful that this text, which was arrived at after a series of consultations and negotiations with the co-ordinators of other groups, can be the basis for a realistic and

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

constructive approach to working out satisfactory solutions in the future. I am confident that the efforts made by the sponsors will receive the full support of all delegations so that a consensus draft resolution may emerge.

On behalf of the non-aligned States members of the First Committee, my delegation has the privilege of introducing draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.10, on implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

Except for one additional operative paragraph included to record the progress made in the procedural aspects of the preparatory work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean during its two sessions this year, the draft resolution contains the same preambular and operative paragraphs as General Assembly resolution 44/120 adopted at its last regular session. As may be recalled, 137 States Members voted in favour of that resolution. As a result of the consultations held during the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, the Chairman of the Committee requested my Government to host the Colombo Conference on the Indian Ocean in 1992. The Government of Sri Lanka agreed to that request. Accordingly, as can be seen from operative paragraph 7, the Colombo Conference is now rescheduled to be held in 1992. During its summer session, the Ad Hoc Committee was able to finalize the draft agenda of the Colombo Conference, which had been before the Committee for several years. This is a significant development. The Committee also made progress in the preparation of the draft rules of procedure of the Colombo Conference. Those achievements are referred to in operative paragraph 5.

The establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region has become more relevant in the context of recent developments on the international scene. There is a greater desire among States Members, particularly the greater Powers and the super-Powers, to work towards the establishment of international peace and security through co-operation, not confrontation. There is an overwhelming view

(Mr. Rasaputram, Sri Lanka)

that this goal could be best achieved through lower levels of military capabilities and presence, in an atmosphere in which one should not dominate the other. This is the aim of the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean region. In keeping with this objective, it is our hope that the States members of the Committee will support the draft resolution.

To that end, the group of non-aligned States members are prepared to enter into negotiations with other delegations, if that is considered necessary, with a view to achieving agreement on a text that may eventually be adopted by the General Assembly.

Mr. AMIGUES (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation wishes to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.37, entitled "Confidence- and security-building measures and conventional disarmament in Europe", under sub-item (d) of item 56 of the agenda. The draft resolution is sponsored by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Yugoslavia and my own country.

(Mr. Amigues, France)

This draft resolution, which follows resolutions 43/75 P of 1988 and 44/116 I of 1989 concerns the Vienna negotiations within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE), one between the member countries of the two military alliances on conventional armed forces in Europe and the other between the 34 States participating in the CSCE on new confidence- and security-building measures.

As many speakers said in the course of the general debate in the First Committee, the Vienna negotiations have made rapid progress and we hope they will lead to the signing of a first treaty on conventional disarmament in Europe and to the conclusion of a significant agreement on new confidence- and security-building measures in Paris, where a meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the 34 countries of the CSCE will be held from 19 to 21 November.

In view of the time constraints it has not been possible to mention in the draft resolution submitted to the First Committee the date of the Paris summit meeting. That meeting will take place between the time of the decision by the First Committee and the submission of the draft resolution to the General Assembly. My delegation would therefore like to indicate here and now that an amendment to this draft resolution will be submitted before its consideration in plenary in order to reflect faithfully the events that will take place in Paris.

My delegation hopes that this draft resolution, like similar resolutions in 1988 and 1989 on the same subject, will command a consensus.

Mr. MORENO (Italy): On behalf of the European Community and its member States, I should like to make some comments on item 56 (h) of the agenda, concerning the relationship between disarmament and development, on which a specific draft resolution is now under consideration.

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

The Twelve played a full part in the deliberations of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held in New York from 24 August to 11 September 1987. They fully subscribe to the notion enshrined in the Final Document of the Conference that disarmament and development are two of the most urgent challenges facing the world today and that they are two pillars on which enduring international peace and security can be built.

It is a common perception that the world is over-armed and that a high degree of complementarity exists between the reduction of military expenditure and the allocation of resources in favour of economic and social development. However, the interplay between disarmament and development can be perceived and understood correctly only if disarmament and development are viewed within the larger context of their mutual interrelationship with security. Decisions to increase or reduce military expenditure remain tied to issues of international and regional security.

The Twelve have concretely and consistently shown their commitment to disarmament and development and are resolved to spare no effort to give practical expression to them.

We are today experiencing a new, encouraging trend in international affairs, and we are confident that the significant improvement in East-West relations, together with substantial progress in current disarmament negotiations - at both the bilateral and the European regional level - will open new and positive prospects in terms of saving and reallocating economic, technological and social resources now devoted to military purposes.

The member States of the European Community, for their part, are playing an active role in the various relevant multilateral forums dealing with disarmament, with the purpose of scaling down conventional arsenals and ensuring peace and security at the lowest possible levels of armaments.

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

In addition, as the achievement of the fourth Lomé Convention of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP) underlines, increased attention is being given, in a spirit of genuine solidarity and partnership, to economic co-operation and aid programmes in favour of developing countries with a view to contributing to the creation of a more humane international order. This requires broad collective efforts by the whole international community, including developing countries. It involves a common and coherent current perception of security requirements, greater transparency and objective and balanced information on military spending.

In this connection the Twelve cannot refrain from voicing their concern at recent events in particularly sensitive areas which have a detrimental impact on the overall picture of international relations at a moment when renewed bold efforts are being made at different levels to curb the arms race and conclude major disarmament agreements.

The Disarmament Commission, in the report of its 1990 session, clearly stated that:

> "The global expenditure on arms and armed forces, by far the largest part of which is attributable to conventional arms and armed forces, represents a massive consumption of resources for potentially destructive purposes in a stark contrast to the urgent need for social and economic development and for increased international co-operation in those fields. Reduction in military expenditure by releasing resources could, therefore, entail benefits both in the social and economic fields as well as in the political field."
>
> (A/45/42, p. 25, para. 15)

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

In that spirit and towards this end it is essential that all nations accept their share of responsibility, exercise restraint and avoid a build-up of armaments, particularly in areas where a desperate and growing need for development, in the fullest sense of the word, deserves priority consideration.

(Mr. Moreno, Italy)

The Twelve are also convinced that new and imaginative efforts in the field of arms transfers are required if the level of conventional armaments is to be lowered throughout the world. Restraint in arms trading and abstention from acquiring arms in excess of those needed for legitimate national security requirements could contribute towards the achievement of this goal.

The European Community and its member States have already welcomed the report prepared by the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 43/75 B, of 7 December 1988, on the implementation of the action programme adopted at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. The report is a useful contribution to efforts to work with genuine goodwill, determination and perseverance towards the goal we all share of a secure world with fewer weapons and more prosperity.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the United Kingdom, who will introduce the draft decision in document A/C.1/45/L.34.

Miss SOLESBY (United Kingdom): I have the honour to introduce the draft decision in document A/C.1/45/L.34, on information on arms control and disarmament agreements. I do so on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The draft decision invites the Secretary-General to prepare and make available on request appropriate information on multilateral and bilateral arms control and disarmament agreements, with the aim of providing an easily available source of texts and measures used in such agreements. The unclassified material for this

(Miss Solesby, United Kingdom)

purpose is to be provided by the relevant Member States on a voluntary basis. This applies both to texts and to any additional factual information relevant to the texts which States parties may choose to provide. This proposal would be funded by making use of existing resources and voluntary contributions.

It is tne hope of the sponsors that this collection of material would provide a useful source of reference for government officials engaged in arms control and disarmament negotiations. It would enable them to benefit from the approaches used in similar agreements in the recent past. Any official interested in knowing, for example, what verification techniques had been applied to a given category of weaponry, or what confidence-building measures had been employed at what phase in negotiations, what definitions had been used for a given armament, or the subsequent record of implementation, would be able to obtain the facts speedily and easily from the United Nations compilation. Officials could learn quickly what had been done on previous occasions and adapt this to their own situation.

This proposal is intended to provide a tool for disarmament negotiation of practical use to Member States. The sponsors hope that it will commend itself to all our fellow members and be adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
27th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 6 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 27th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. NEGROTTO CAMBIASO (Italy): On behalf of the twelve member States of the European Community, I wish to make some comments on agenda item 56 (d), regarding conventional disarmament, on which a specific draft resolution is under consideration.

Nuclear disarmament is one of the most important priorities for the countries on behalf of which I am speaking. At the same time, the Twelve have regularly emphasized that conventional arms control and disarmament are essential and must be pursued as a matter of urgency as an integral part of the process of general and complete disarmament, in which all States of the world, according to their security situation, must take an active part.

Since the end of the Second World War numerous conflicts fought with conventional weapons in all parts of the world have continued to cause death and injury to millions of people, bringing about unspeakable destruction and suffering. As conflicts and tensions arising in particular regional situations have been exacerbated by initiatives aimed at acquiring positions of political and economic supremacy, it has become all the more urgent for all States to consider measures of conventional arms control and disarmament as a matter of priority.

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

In this light it is incumbent upon all States to intensify their efforts and take appropriate steps in the field of conventional disarmament, particularly through regional agreements that take into account the particular characteristics of each region. Such agreements are likely to prove the most effective means of achieving progress in the foreseeable future towards the enhancement of peace and security.

The Twelve strongly believe that agreements on conventional arms control and disarmament should be considered a fundamental objective. Such agreements, while taking into account the concern to meet the need of all States for undiminished security, should include provisions on effective verification measures as an indispensable tool in ensuring compliance.

The Twelve stress the importance of according priority, in the search for a more stable and secure balance of conventional armed forces at lower levels, to the reduction of weapons systems which are particularly suited to large-scale offensive action and surprise attack, in order to remove destabilizing threats and enhance security.

Europe has embarked on this path. The Twelve welcome the rapid progress in the Vienna negotiations taking place in the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). They look forward to early and successful agreement in both sets of negotiations. They strongly emphasize that they attach the highest priority to the conclusion, at the CSCE summit in Paris next month, of a treaty on conventional forces in Europe. Twenty-two countries are now engaged in a process aimed at reaching agreement on major reductions in their armed forces and on disarmament. The achievement of a first agreement in the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe will contribute to the subsequent pursuit of more far-reaching measures aimed at enhancing security and stability.

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

The Twelve hope that discussions will be started among the 34 aimed at establishing by 1992, after the Helsinki meeting, a new process of disarmament and confidence-building measures open to all CSCE participants wishing to take part. This first huge reduction of conventional weapons to be agreed upon multilaterally in Europe will represent decisive progress towards greater stability and security and make a substantial contribution to disarmament in general.

Europe's experience indicates that successful disarmament negotiations are significantly facilitated by the creation of appropriately favourable political conditions. In this respect, I would like to stress the continued determination of the Twelve to work for substantive and innovative results in the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, in order, inter alia, further to expand contacts and exchanges of information on military matters and foster greater transparency and openness.

The continued exchange of data provided for by the United Nations system of standardized reports on military budgets constitutes an additional and important general confidence-building measure.

The Twelve reaffirm their resolve to promote wider and better dissemination of information on military capabilities and structures and other military matters as a means of alleviating international tension and preventing overestimation of military requirements deriving from a misperception of security needs at both the regional and the subregional level. They wish to confirm their support for resolution 43/75 G, on objective information on military matters, in the expectation that its recommendations will be followed by an increasing number of States.

At the same time, the Twelve share the opinion that greater attention should be paid by the international community to the issue of arms transfers, which can

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

have serious implications for disarmament. Restraint and openness are of the utmost importance for the creation of a climate conducive to realistic measures dealing with arms transfers. The Twelve have taken note of specific proposals to that effect made in the Committee and will not fail to give them careful consideration. The study on ways and means of promoting transparency that the Secretary-General is undertaking in accordance with resolution 43/75 I is expected to provide the basis for a better understanding of the matter and for devising viable solutions to this problem of such growing relevance.

The subject of conventional arms control and disarmament should be kept at the forefront of the multilateral debate on disarmament. The Twelve welcome the agreement reached by the Disarmamert Commission, at its 1990 session, on the question of conventional disarmament, after years of efforts in that direction. This is a significant result which opens up new prospects for understanding on a subject whose importance is widely acknowledged. They also welcome the Disarmament Commission's recognition of the importance of efforts to bring about disarmament on a regional scale.

In this connection, the Twelve believe that the experience in this field gained, and yet to be acquired, in Europe can provide valuable references and useful indications for work in other regions.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.50.

Mr. AGAYEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Today the Soviet delegation is submitting draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.50, on the subject of defensive security concepts and policies, which is sponsored also by Australia, Austria, Indonesia and Sweden.

(Mr. Agayev, USSR)

The world community is now entering a new post-confrontation period. The cold war is a thing of the past. A new spirit of co-operation and co-ordinated action is beginning to prevail in international affairs. The first steps have been taken towards genuine disarmament. Power rivalry is giving way to a new model of security which relies exclusively on peaceful means for the settlement of disputes. A legitimate question arises on the role of military capabilities and armed forces in this changed situation.

(Mr. Agayev, USSR)

It is our firmly held view that, as provided in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, States do in fact possess the inherent right to exercise

"individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security."

Indeed, as recent events have demonstrated, defence against aggression remains a crucial factor that must be taken into account by States in defining their policies.

These policies should strictly conform to the requirements of the United Nations Charter and rely on the norms of international law. That is why draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.50 contains a proposal to initiate a discussion of approaches to defence policies and possible options for rendering the military capabilities of States purely defensive in nature. This is an ambitious task that involves taking into account a multitude of political factors, including various concepts of armed-force development and different perceptions of the nature of relations among States. This cannot, quite obviously, be accomplished overnight, let alone unilaterally. It requires broad dialogue to review and address in concrete terms the entire spectrum of existing opinions on the subject.

We welcome the fact that such an exchange is already under way in Europe. It has received a major impetus from this year's seminar in Vienna on military doctrines. The forthcoming agreement on radical cuts in armed forces and armaments in Europe holds out the hope that in that region a material groundwork may soon be laid for the development of entirely new perceptions of the role and meaning of military capabilities. Europe, however, cannot remain an oasis of security. We expect these positive trends to emerge elsewhere as well, obviously in forms that will reflect the unique features of each particular region.

(Mr. Agayev, USSR)

In our view all United Nations Members must strictly observe the provisions of the United Nations Charter and, to this end, should join the process of defining the parameters and criteria of defence policies as an important factor in strengthening security and stability and moving from confrontation to co-operation in every region of the world. We therefore welcome the agreement of the Security Commission concluded by representatives of five Central American nations as an important step towards lasting peace and an atmosphere of trust in Central America. In addition to all other considerations it has been an interesting example of regional efforts in this area carried out with the support of the United Nations.

We are pleased to note that at this session a number of delegations have already called for making disarmament a global process in which all members of the world community should become involved. We believe that that feeling is fully consonant with our proposals on defence concepts and that it indicates a willingness on the part of the international community to get down to practical work in this field. We believe that, in practical terms, that objective would be well served by a United Nations study supported by Government experts, which is in fact provided for in document A/C.1/45/L.50. Such a study could offer a comprehensive picture of existing views and map out the main avenues to be followed in the formulation of defence policies, thus providing a sense of direction to the discussions that will be held on the subject.

For its part the Soviet Union has outlined its views with regard to defence concepts and security policies in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (A/45/556) in which it has set forth the basic principles of Soviet military doctrine and listed the practical measures taken to implement it. We hope that the proposed study will help us, inter alia, and facilitate further steps towards the achievement of our stated goal of adopting a purely defensive military posture.

(Mr. Agayev, USSR)

In conclusion I should like to express our appreciation to the delegations of Australia, Austria, Indonesia and Sweden for their constructive co-operation as sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.50. We also earnestly hope that the draft resolution now before the Committee will obtain widespread support.

Mr. HERNANDEZ BASAVE (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Given the absence of negotiations on the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the reluctance of the nuclear Powers to abandon their nuclear military plans, the overwhelming majority of countries in the international community have set more modest goals for themselves with a view to halting and reversing the arms race. Unfortunately, even those measures have not always enjoyed the support of all States and have not, therefore, achieved the desired success. For example, with regard to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons we still cannot say that the international community has an effective legal régime to prevent the proliferation of such weapons. Indeed, at the present time existing arsenals are not only numerically greater than they were 20 years ago but they also have such a destructive capacity that if it were decided to detonate only a few of such devices the entire planet could disappear in but a few seconds. Hence it cannot be said that initiatives to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons have thus far been successful.

Another measure that many countries have persistently advocated in their desire to rid themselves of the threat posed by nuclear weapons is the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in their regions of the world, but even such initiatives have not yielded the desired results. Mexico takes great pride in having actively contributed to the preparation of the Tlatelolco Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, which created the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a heavily populated area. The conclusion of the Treaty of Tlatelolco has been recognized by the General Assembly as an event of historic significance in the

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promote international peace and security.

In order to ensure that the statute defined in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and its goals will be fully effective, the Treaty includes two additional protocols, which are open for signature by States that have international responsibility, de jure or de facto, for territories in the geographic zone set forth in the Treaty and by nuclear-weapon States.

Additional Protocol II has been signed and ratified by the nuclear-weapon States, while Additional Protocol I has been signed and ratified by three of the four States to which it is open. The first country to accede to Additional Protocol I was the United Kingdom, which did so more than 20 years ago; the second was the Netherlands, 19 years ago; and the third the United States of America, 9 years ago. France signed Additional Protocol I in 1979 but has not so far ratified it.

On behalf of the delegations of Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bolivia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela and Mexico - all States parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty - I have the honour to introduce, under agenda item 45 of the General Assembly's current session, draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.28, concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America.

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

As in past years, the General Assembly would deplore the fact that France had not yet ratified Additional Protocol I of the Treaty and would urge it once more not to delay any further its ratification. The 18 States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which are sponsoring this draft resolution, firmly believe that France's accession to Additional Protocol I would make a significant contribution to the full effectiveness of the Treaty and would thus contribute to realizing the goals of the Treaty in support of nuclear disarmament and international peace and security.

On 3 July 1990, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (OPANAL) decided, in its resolution 267 (E-V), to add to the legal title of the Treaty the terms "and the Caribbean"; this has been duly reflected in operative paragraph 3 of the draft now before us.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of Sierra Leone, who will introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.39 and A/C.1/45/L.40 on behalf of the African Group of States.

Mr. BANGALI (Sierra Leone): I have the honour, on behalf of the Group of African States to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.39, dealing with agenda item 54 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, and draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.40, on agenda item 56 (m), concerning the prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes.

As at previous Assembly sessions in recent years, the draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa has two parts. Part A deals with the implementation of the Declaration and part B focuses on the related problem of South Africa's nuclear capability.

For 26 years, African States have consistently and strongly reaffirmed the objectives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa, seeing it as an important measure designed to prevent

(Mr. Bangali, Sierra Leone)

the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to promote regional as well as international peace and security. Since 1965, when the General Assembly by its resolution 2033 (XX) of 3 December endorsed the OAU Declaration, the Assembly has consistently supported the goal of Africa's denuclearization and called for the implementation of the Declaration. The Assembly has also consistently condemned any attempt by South Africa to introduce nuclear weapons into Africa, viewing South Africa's nuclear capability as a threat to international peace and security and, in particular, as an impediment to the realization of the objective of the OAU Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

South Africa's refusal to place all its nuclear facilities and programmes under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its unwillingness to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) cannot but raise serious questions about its nuclear intentions. We find it difficult to understand why any country that is serious about non-proliferation would collaborate with South Africa in the nuclear field since South Africa has done nothing to demonstrate its good intentions in this field. We therefore seize this opportunity once again to call upon all States, corporations and institutions to refrain from any collaboration with South Africa in the nuclear field until South Africa unconditionally accedes to the NPT and places all its nuclear facilities and programmes under IAEA safeguards. The proliferation of capabilities for the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction is a threat to all countries and to international peace and security as a whole.

Many studies have been done and many reports prepared on South Africa's nuclear capability and the conclusion has been uniform: that South Africa has attained the capability to manufacture, deploy and deliver nuclear weapons. This is an alarming and frightening fact which calls for urgent and concrete action by the international community. We therefore urge the adoption and practical

(Mr. Bangali, Sierra Leone)

implementation of the consensus recommendations adopted by the Disarmament Commission this year on South Africa's nuclear capability; and in part A of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.39 we call for concrete United Nations support for African efforts to begin to advance the realization of the objectives of the 1964 OAU Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

After all the studies that have been done on this subject, and in view of all the other relevant developments that have taken place since the Declaration was adopted, we feel that the question of a convention or treaty on denuclearization in all its aspects should now be examined by us and by experts, focusing on the modalities, elements and other related issues. For that purpose, we envisage a meeting of experts during 1991 in Addis Ababa, the seat of the Organization of African Unity. For the organization and convening of that important meeting, which should be open to all OAU member States, we request the Secretary-General to provide such necessary assistance as the OAU may require.

As representatives are aware, the 1964 OAU Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa envisaged the preparation of an "international treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations". Thus, in its resolution 2033 (XX) of 3 December 1965, by which it endorsed the Declaration, the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to extend to the OAU such assistance and facilities as might be requested in order to achieve the aims of the Declaration.

In subsequent resolutions on this subject, the General Assembly has made similar requests to the Secretary-General, including most recently the request contained in resolution 44/113 A of 15 December 1989. We are therefore confident that the Secretary-General will take the necessary measures, not only to ensure the implementation of the present resolution, but also to facilitate the realization of the objectives of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa.

(Mr. Bangali, Sierra Leone)

Member States are requested, in part B of the draft resolution, to submit to the Secretary-General their views and suggestions on the Secretary-General's report on South Africa's ballistic missile capability. The Secretary-General is requested to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session. We feel that it would be very helpful for the international community to have the views and suggestions of Member States on the important issues covered in the Secretary-General's study in order to facilitate the taking of appropriate decisions or actions on the matter. If the international community is truly serious about promoting non-proliferation, we are confident that it will support Africa's efforts to implement the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa. Collaboration with, or any sort of support for, South Africa's nuclear programmes can only undermine efforts at non-proliferation. We totally and unequivocally reject any attempts by South Africa to introduce conditions on international demands that it accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear activities under international safeguards and inspection.

In commending draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.39 to the First Committee, the African Group hopes that the draft resolution, in its two parts, will receive the unanimous support of all member States.

(Mr. Bangali, Sierra Leone)

I wish also to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.40, on prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes. The draft resolution speaks for itself and deals with a subject on which the international community is firmly united, namely, protection of the health and safety of human beings, all living organisms and the environment as a whole from the devastating effects of radioactive wastes.

Such wastes do not discriminate between people or nations in their destruction; they affect everyone exposed to them. However, some countries or regions are better prepared than others for dealing with such wastes. Some countries, including most of the member States of the Organization of African Unity, do not produce any radioactive wastes at all; yet some countries which do, have illegally and callously used our territories for the dumping of such hazardous wastes. This is a blot on the conscience of mankind as a whole which I am confident the international community will readily erase by adopting effective international instruments to prohibit the dumping of radioactive wastes. We commend this draft resolution to the First Committee for adoption by consensus.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I have to inform the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.11, Jordan; L.13, Czechoslovakia and Mali; L.15, Kenya; L.16, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic; L.17, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nigeria, Sudan, Swaziland and Zimbabwe; L.21, Bolivia, India and Suriname; L.22, L.23, L.24 and L.26, Bolivia; L.28, Grenada; L.29 and L.30, Bolivia; L.31, Chile, India, Kenya, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Singapore and Suriname; L.32, Bolivia; L.33, Bolivia and Myanmar; L.34, Bolivia and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic; L.36, Bolivia and Nepal; L.37, Cyprus; L.38, Australia and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic; L.40 and L.41,

(Mr. Kheradi)

Suriname; L.44, Nepal and Suriname; L.49, Indonesia and Suriname; L.51, Austria, Colombia and Mali; L.52, Czechoslovakia and Ireland; and L.53, Bolivia and the Philippines.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
28th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 6 November 1990
at 3 p.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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- Consideration of and action on all disarmament agenda items (continued)

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A/C.1/45/PV.28
7 November 1990
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The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42, entitled "Study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification". I do so on behalf of Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Samoa, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Zaire and my own country, Sweden.

I see this task as a token of the co-operation between those countries which were active in launching and carrying out the study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification. The enabling resolution for the study was submitted in 1988 after long negotiations between the countries represented in the Six-Nation Initiative on the one hand and Canada, France and the Netherlands on the other. The Group of Experts was chaired by Ambassador Fred Bild of Canada. Governmental experts from 20 countries participated in the study.

Initiatives on the question of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification are by no means limited to the nine countries to which I have specifically referred. There are in fact a large number of States which take an active interest in this matter. This has been demonstrated in the General Assembly and its First Committee, as well as in the Disarmament Commission and in the Group of Qualified Governmental Experts; it testifies to the importance of the matter,

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

and it also bodes well for the future prospects for pursuing multilateral co-operation in this field within the United Nations.

The draft resolution underlines the important role that the United Nations, in accordance with its Charter, has to play in the sphere of disarmament. By that text, the General Assembly would recall that all the peoples of the world have a vital interest in the success of disarmament negotiations and that, consequently, all States have the duty to contribute to efforts in the field of disarmament. It would further note that the critical importance of verification of and compliance with arms limitation and disarmament agreements was universally recognized, and would stress that the issue of verification was a matter of concern to all nations. In the terms of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would recognize that the United Nations, in accordance with its role and responsibilities established under the Charter, could make a significant contribution in the field of verification, in particular of multilateral agreements. The General Assembly would take note of all proposals that had been put forward in the field of verification by Member States, including those by Canada and the Netherlands, France and the countries of the Six-Nation Initiative. It would also affirm its support for the 16 principles of verification drawn up by the Disarmament Commission, and recall the enabling resolution to which I referred earlier, resolution 43/81 B, and its mandate for a study of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification.

In the operative part, the General Assembly would welcome the report of the Secretary-General (A/45/372 and Add.1), and note that it had been approved by the Group of Qualified Governmental Experts. The General Assembly would commend the report to the attention of Member States, and request the Secretary-General to give it the widest possible circulation. It would also request the Secretary-General to take appropriate action within available resources on the recommendations of the

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Group. Member States would be encouraged to give active consideration to the recommendations contained in the concluding chapter and to assist the Secretary-General in their implementation where appropriate. The General Assembly would request that the Secretary-General report to it at its forty-seventh session on actions taken by Member States and by the United Nations Secretariat to implement these recommendations. Lastly, the General Assembly would decide to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-seventh session an item entitled "Verification in all its aspects, including the role of the United Nations in the field of verification". The agenda item, while maintaining its broad character, would thus also specifically focus on the role of the United Nations in this vital field.

The Group of Experts was able to agree on a recommendation that the United Nations should develop a consolidated data bank of published materials and data provided on a voluntary basis by Member States on all aspects of verification and compliance, and that it should make the data easily accessible to all Member States. It also recommended that the United Nations should promote exchanges between experts and diplomats. The Group further expressed the view that, in the short run, the Secretary-General's capabilities might be further strengthened and broadened, provided that he was granted the necessary mandate. An example was mentioned, that of possibly extending the Secretary-General's fact-finding mandate. The Group of Experts also considered the possibility of the use by the United Nations of aircraft and satellites as verification tools. It did not pass definitive judgement on these issues. However, the Experts stated that a first step towards this could be a decision to organize, within the existing architecture, a clearing-house for data gathered from existing satellites, where training would also be offered in the field of basic photo-interpretation.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Finally, the Group of Experts considered the question of an international verification system. The establishment of such a system within the United Nations had been proposed, inter alia, by the countries of the Six-Nation Initiative. Although the Group did not pass definitive judgement on this issue, it recognized that the subject would continue to be considered in the light of future developments.

The chapter on conclusions and recommendations is, of course, of particular interest as a basis for further action. However, it should be noted that the study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification contains an overview of that issue which is very comprehensive, and should therefore be of value as a reference work for the future.

To conclude, I should like to express the hope that this draft resolution will be adopted without a vote.

Ms. MASON (Canada): As we have just been reminded by my colleague from Sweden, two years ago the General Assembly adopted a resolution in which it requested the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, an in-depth study of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification. It was an honour for Canada that a Canadian was selected to serve as Chairman of the Group of Experts that conducted this study.

My delegation is highly satisfied with the outcome of the Group's deliberations, which is summarized in the foreword by the Secretary-General to document A/45/372. The Group of Experts carried out a thorough and stimulating debate on the role that the United Nations might play in the field of verification, which included discussion of a wide range of specific proposals in this area.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

Canada is pleased to join 39 other Member States from all regions in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42, introduced this afternoon by Sweden, in which the Secretary-General is requested to take appropriate action within available resources on the recommendations of the Group. The recommendations, as a component of the Group's report as a whole, were agreed by all the experts serving in the Group, and include specific suggestions on measures in the field of verification that the United Nations can take at this time.

The creation of a consolidated data bank was the first of the three recommendations and one that my delegation believes, when implemented, has the potential to provide a valuable service. This centralized source of information on verification may be drawn upon by all States as well as by experts interested in learning of the experience acquired and expertise already developed in the verification of arms-limitation and disarmament agreements. Canada has begun to provide such information and will continue to make available to the Secretary-General relevant material based on our research and experience in the area of verification.

I urge other Member States with relevant experience in this field to do likewise. The usefulness of the United Nations consolidated data bank will be determined, in large measure, by the support that it receives from its Members.

Canada equally looks forward to the implementation of the second of the Group's recommendations, namely that of exchanges between experts and diplomats. Both groups stand to benefit from such interaction, and the United Nations is uniquely in a position to co-ordinate such exchanges.

The third recommendation reflects the consensus view within the Group of Experts that the Secretary-General's fact-finding capabilities in connection with certain arms-limitation and disarmament agreements may be strengthened and

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

broadened, provided he is given the necessary mandate. This recommendation should be kept in mind by parties to existing and future arms-limitation and disarmament agreements.

The implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report represents another step in the process of elaborating an appropriate role for the United Nations in the field of verification. Canada urges all Members to assist the Secretary-General, as they are able, in his efforts to act on the recommendations and thereby allow the United Nations to demonstrate its ability to make a positive contribution in the field of verification of arms-limitation and disarmament agreements. We look forward to the report of the Secretary-General at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly on actions taken to implement these recommendations.

In conclusion, I should like to echo the words of Ambassador Hyltenius in Sweden's introduction of the draft resolution and express the hope that it will be adopted without a vote.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): Verification in its broadest sense is one of the fundamental tasks of the United Nations. The conduct of Governments in various spheres has been a continuing concern of the Organization, much of whose activity has been focused on considering, and even on occasion judging, the conduct of countries in a wide variety of areas, including decolonization, international economic relations, human rights and - more recently - the environment.

With regard to decolonization, for example, the General Assembly demanded that it be made aware of the situation of various peoples under colonial régimes. Administering Powers have had to report on their policies towards their colonies, and the United Nations has frequently, despite the resistance of various Member

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

States, sent observers to those Territories or heard petitioners, and has thus verified, so to speak, the information given to it.

The United Nations has also played an important role in the verification of disarmament agreements. In recent years, at the request of the General Assembly and the Security Council, the Secretary-General has investigated alleged violations of the Geneva Protocol of 1925. For nearly two decades the United Nations has been perfecting an instrument for the standardized international reporting of military expenditures. In this regard, we are grateful for the data recently transmitted to the Secretariat by the Governments of Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland.

At the same time, an Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament has been perfecting a system for the world-wide exchange of seismic data through the establishment of a network of high-quality seismographic stations, national and international centres and telecommunications channels for the rapid exchange of data between them. The work of that Ad Hoc Committee is of special importance for the verification system that might be used for an eventual treaty banning nuclear tests.

Through many peace-keeping operations and observer missions, the United Nations has acquired a great deal of experience which will prove useful in the matter of verification. Similarly, both the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research have carried out activities relating to various aspects of verification and have done studies of the subject.

Starting with its first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978, the General Assembly has intensified its work on verification in disarmament. There have been an increasing number of proposals aimed at strengthening the role of the United Nations in this area. For example, in 1988, on the basis of the Stockholm Declaration of January that year, Argentina, Greece, India, the United Republic of

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

Tanzania, Sweden and Mexico proposed, at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, approval of the principle of a multilateral, integrated verification system under the aegis of the United Nations, as part of a sounder multilateral mechanism needed to guarantee peace and security during the process of disarmament and in a world free of nuclear weapons. Here I refer to document A/S-15/AC.1/1.

In 1988, in its resolution 43/81 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to undertake, with the assistance of a group of qualified governmental experts, a study of the role of the United Nations in the field of verification. The results of that study have been distributed in document A/45/372 and Corr.1. We thank Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden for introducing draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42, in which the General Assembly would welcome the Secretary-General's report. As has already been said, the report is a good starting-point for enhancing the role of the United Nations, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in this field.

The delegation of Mexico believes that the Secretary-General must now carefully consider the various proposals in the report. Of course, the ability to collate data must be improved and exchanges between experts and diplomats must be encouraged. But it is also necessary now to identify means to help create an international verification system and thus follow the course that the vast majority of Member States have been advocating.

Mr. PATOKALLIO (Finland): I am speaking in support of what was said earlier by the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius, when he introduced draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42, subtitled "Study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification", and of what has been said by other delegations who have already spoken in support of the draft resolution.

My delegation attaches great importance to the subject of verification of international disarmament and arms-limitation agreements. Likewise, we support an enhanced role for the United Nations in this field. As we already stated in the general debate in the Committee, on 18 October, Finland welcomes the study at hand. The study contains a number of solid and practical recommendations. We are especially pleased that the idea of a verification data base, put forward by Finland in 1986, is incorporated in one of the recommendations. For our part, we are ready to make our computerized analytical data base for verification of chemical weapons available for use in the consolidated United Nations data bank.

My country sets great store by the fact that the study reflects a consensus of those who participated in its preparation. It seems to us that consensus is essential for further progress in enhancing the role of the United Nations in verification. Draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42 has been prepared with that in mind. We are grateful to Canada, and to Ambassador Mason in particular, for the efforts undertaken with the objective of consensus as the lodestar.

The study represents a common denominator of various views on the role of the United Nations in verification. This is the first time there has been such a convergence of views as far as practical recommendations in this field are concerned.

Coming from a land of vast forests, we learn early on that the most practical way to climb a tree is from the roots up. That is why we attach so much importance

(Mr. Patokallio, Finland)

to this draft resolution, and to its paragraph 5 in particular. It is a beginning - and that is what is important at this point.

Like those who spoke before me, my delegation urges that draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42 be adopted without a vote.

Mr. AMIGUES (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation, which is one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42, just introduced by the representative of Sweden, supports the essential points made by Ambassador Hyltenius. As he rightly noted, France is among the countries on whose initiative the Secretary-General undertook a study on the role of the United Nations in the field of verification. Moreover, a French expert took part in the preparation of the study, which the draft resolution commends to the attention of Member States.

That is why France fully supports the content of the report and hopes its conclusions and recommendations will be implemented. This is a first realistic step towards strengthening the activities of the United Nations in the field of verifying arms-limitation and disarmament agreements. In that connection, France is pleased that the report recognizes that

> "The context in which verification takes place is that of the sovereign right of States to conclude arms-limitation and disarmament agreements and their obligation to implement them. Verification is conducted by the parties to an agreement, or by an organization at their request". (A/45/372, annex, para. 255)

My delegation wishes to thank most particularly the delegations of Canada, the Netherlands and Sweden for the active role they played in the consultations that resulted in draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.42. Like preceding speakers, I hope the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. NEGROTTO CAMBIASO (Italy): I should like on behalf of the European Community and its member States to make some comments on agenda item 60 (g), concerning confidence- and security-building measures - an issue on which two of our partners have submitted specific draft resolutions.

Confidence- and security-building measures are a pillar of our security, and they play an important role in complementing and facilitating progress in arms control and disarmament. Our aim is to develop further the régime of the Stockholm document established by the countries participating in the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) by promoting further transparency, openness and predictability in the military field, thus reducing the danger of military confrontation. In this context, we look forward to an early and successful agreement in the negotiations under way in Vienna on confidence- and security-building measures.

The degree of mutual confidence in Europe has already increased as a result of the implementation of specific measures which are designed to reduce the risk of armed conflicts and are contained in the Stockholm document. In that framework, the use of on-site inspection has now become accepted. The clear link between this practice and the future requirements for verification of further arms-control agreements is another substantial benefit resulting from the Stockholm document.

The negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures taking place simultaneously with the talks on conventional forces in Europe, within the framework of the CSCE process, began in Vienna in March 1989. The Twelve, together with other States, are actively involved. These negotiations, in addition to improving security and co-operation, have been developing further communication and understanding among participants.

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

An important seminar devoted to the security concepts and military doctrines of the then 35 CSCE countries, which took place from 16 January to 5 February 1990 as an integral part of the negotiations on confidence- and security-building measures, represented a step unprecedented in the history of arms control. The dialogue underscored the usefulness of strengthening the co-operative dimension of security and the need to ensure that actual military capabilities and deployments are in line with defensive concepts and doctrines.

In a world where examples of the use or threat of use of force continue to be a source of concern to the international community, confidence- and security-building measures should play an ever-increasing role. Although they do not by themselves represent a substitute or a pre-condition for disarmament, they are none the less a complementary element of great importance.

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

The positive developments in East-West relations already apparent at the last session have accelerated further. Dramatic political changes have taken place in Europe. Promising indications have been emerging in other regional contexts. However, these positive developments are marred by conflicts and tensions elsewhere. In particular, they are being overshadowed by the unacceptable Iraqi aggression in the Gulf.

In the view of the Twelve, confidence- and security-building measures, for their part, can play a significant role in translating positive political developments into greater transparency, openness and predictability in the military sphere, particularly at the regional level, thus contributing to the prevention of misperceptions and wrong assessments about respective national security requirements.

Transparency in military spending and exchanges of information on military budgets have also been taken into account as a means of fostering confidence- and security-building measures on the basis of a United Nations instrument for standardized international reporting of military expenditures.

The Twelve welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the experience collected by Member States in the implementation of confidence-building measures, which represents a further follow-up of the Disarmament Commission's approval in 1988 of a set of guidelines for the development of confidence-building measures. The Twelve would also like to mention the draft resolutions that have been submitted on the issue of confidence- and security-building measures.

Although the security situation in Europe has particular characteristics owing to special military and geopolitical configurations, the possibility of using the experience of European confidence- and security-building measures in other regions of the world must not be dismissed a priori or overlooked. The Twelve therefore

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

encourage all States to consider in this respect the widest possible use of confidence-building measures in their international relations, whether bilateral, regional or global.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I have to inform the Committee that the following countries have become sponsors of the following draft resolutions: draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.11, Yemen; L.17, L.23, L.29 and L.47, the Ukrainian SSR; L.36, Senegal; L.46, Suriname; L.49 and L.50, the Byelorussian SSR; and L.51, Bulgaria and Papua New Guinea.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: As I informed members earlier, it is my intention this afternoon to distribute to the Committee an informal paper containing a list of all draft resolutions under disarmament agenda items arranged in appropriate clusters.

After intensive consultations with the Committee's officers, and with the assistance and co-operation of the Secretariat of the Committee, I am now in a position to present to the Committee a paper setting out the Chairman's suggested programme listing those resolutions in 13 clusters.

As the Committee is aware, a certain pattern has evolved during the past few years with respect to the clustering exercise, and the officers of the Committee were cognizant of this when they undertook the task of grouping the various draft resolutions on the basis of the most logical and practical criteria available. At the same time, the officers of the Committee endeavoured to group them, to the extent feasible, according to the subject-matter dealt with. In this connection I should like to reiterate that the officers were guided in their task by their desire to facilitate and expedite the work of the Committee with a view to ensuring the most effective and efficient utilization of the time available during this phase of the Committee's work.

(The Chairman)

With regard to the timetable for action on the draft resolutions and on the basis of precedent, it is my intention to move, as far as possible, from one cluster to another cluster sequentially upon conclusion of action on each cluster.

Nevertheless, in following that procedure we shall, of course, maintain the desirable degree of flexibility. Whenever I am in a position to give a precise indication of the days on which any particular cluster will be taken up, I shall advise the Committee accordingly.

As I informed members earlier, I was hoping that the Committee could proceed to take action on draft resolutions and decisions on Thursday, 8 November. However, during my informal contacts and consultations I received several representations that in view of the ongoing consultations delegations would like to have a little more time before we proceed to take action. After consultation with officers of the Committee and the Secretariat I would like to propose that the Committee meet on Friday morning, 9 November 1990, to take action on draft resolutions and decisions. I will keep members informed at appropriate stages of the clusters to be acted upon as we proceed further.

The procedure during the decision-taking stage on each individual cluster will be as follows: delegations will first have the opportunity to introduce any particular draft resolutions. Subsequently they may make any statements, other than in explanation of vote, which they regard as necessary with respect to draft resolutions in that cluster. Thereafter, delegations wishing to explain their positions or their votes on any or all of the draft resolutions in a particular cluster before a decision is taken will be able to do so. Then, after the Committee has taken a decision on the draft resolutions contained in a given cluster, delegations will be able to explain their positions or votes after the decision has been taken, if they so wish.

(The Chairman)

In order that the Committee's work may proceed in a systematic and efficacious manner, delegations are urged to make, in so far as is possible, one statement on the draft resolutions in any individual cluster, whether in explanation of position or in explanation of vote.

May I take it that the Committee is in agreement with the programme of work and the procedures that I have just outlined?

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I therefore propose that we meet on Friday, 9 November 1990, to take action on clusters 1 and 2, and, time permitting, on cluster 3 as well.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE
29th meeting
held on
Wednesday, 7 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 29th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RANA (Nepal)

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- Statement by the Chairman

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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 45 TO 66 AND 155 (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF AND ACTION ON ALL DISARMAMENT AGENDA ITEMS

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Sweden, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): I am speaking to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47, concerning the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, together with three Protocols on non-detectable fragments, on landmines, booby traps and other devices, and on incendiary weapons.

It is now 10 years since this Convention and its annexed Protocols were adopted by a United Nations conference at Geneva. That Conference concluded its work on 10 October 1980. The Convention was opened for signature here in New York on 10 April 1981, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations was designated as the depositary.

The adoption of the Convention 10 years ago was the result of several years of preparation. The fact that it entered into force on 2 December 1983 - that is, less than three years after its adoption - was a very encouraging indication of the desire of the international community progressively to develop international humanitarian law in the field of weaponry and to give it effect. In the draft resolution the General Assembly would note with satisfaction this positive development, but it would also note the need for wider ratification of the Convention and its annexed Protocols. The Assembly would further stress the possibility, laid down in article 8 of the Convention, of reviewing the scope and operation of the regulations and of setting further international standards relating to other categories of conventional weapons not covered so far.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Thirty-two States have acceded to the Convention and the three annexed Protocols. In the draft resolution States that have not yet become parties to the Convention and its annexed Protocols are urged to exert their best endeavours to do so as early as possible so that the instruments might ultimately obtain universality of adherence.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are: Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia and my own country, Sweden. On behalf of the sponsors I would like to express the hope that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/45/L.47 will be adopted without a vote.

Speaking on behalf of my own delegation I would like to make some further remarks. According to paragraph 3 of article 8 of the Convention, a review or amendment conference may be convened 10 years following the entry into force of the Convention, that is, in 1993. It is the view of Sweden that the appropriateness of such a Conference should now be seriously considered. In our opinion, some weapons categories, such as incendiary weapons, should be made the object of further, specific restrictions. A category such as naval mines could, as has been suggested in the United Nations study The Naval Arms Race, be made the object of restrictions in a new protocol, preferably within the framework of the present Convention. As a matter of fact, the Swedish Government has prepared a draft protocol on the use of naval mines, in line with the 1907 Hague Convention relative to the Laying of Automatic Submarine Contact Mines and the 1981 Protocol on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices. The latest version of this draft protocol was introduced at the meeting of the Disarmament

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

Commission last May. It is contained in document A/CN.10/141. The draft protocol is currently under discussion at a series of expert meetings organized by the San Remo Institute on International Humanitarian Law. It is the intention of my Government successively to update and amend the draft protocol in the light of those discussions.

In addition, as already pointed out by Sweden and Switzerland at the twenty-fifth Conference of the Committee of the International Red Cross in 1986, developments in laser technology should be followed closely. There is a definite risk of the development of lasers for anti-personnel purposes on the conventional battlefield. It is thus technically possible to develop and manufacture specific laser weapons the main effect of which would be to blind the adversary's soldiers permanently. Such anti-eye laser weapons would yield certain military advantages, but on balance, taking into account humanitarian considerations, it seems that such lasers should be subject to prohibitions or restrictions on their use, either in a new protocol annexed to the 1980 Convention or by some other means.

Sweden has twice distributed an informal paper on the laser issue in the First Committee. Our conclusion from the comments we have received is that the matter merits international attention and that an international instrument prohibiting at least the systematic and deliberate use of laser against individuals should be considered.

It is therefore gratifying to note that the International Committee of the Red Cross has so far held three expert meetings on the laser issue, one in the summer of 1989, one in June 1990 and another in Geneva from 5 to 7 November of this year. A meeting of governmental experts will be held in April 1991. We understand that the object of these meetings is to gather scientifically sound information on these weapons and their effects for consideration and discussion by Governments.

Mr. AMIGUES (France) (interpretation from French): The French delegation has little to add to what Ambassador Hyltenius, the representative of Sweden, has just said on behalf of the sponsors in submitting draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47.

(Mr. Amigues, France)

My delegation would simply like to associate itself with the call for all States which have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, of 10 October 1980. My country regrets the fact that only 32 States have, like France, become parties, although the Convention was opened for signature almost 10 years ago, on 10 April 1981.

The consolidation of humanitarian law is, in our opinion, a subject that merits attention, even though it is only indirectly related to disarmament. Making armed conflicts less inhuman is a noble objective, and one we can all support. For example, nothing can justify either the use of weapons whose principal effect is to injure with fragments that cannot be detected in the human body using X-rays, or the use of mines, booby traps or other devices such as those prohibited under Protocol II of the Convention.

Mr. NORHEIM (Norway): My delegation would like to make a number of comments on agenda item 64. This year marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, and its three Protocols. The Convention was the product of many years of consideration by the international community, in particular the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, aimed at prohibiting or restricting the use of specific conventional weapons which could have excessively injurious effects. In the view of Norway, the Convention represents a successful attempt at developing humanitarian law in the field of disarmament.

(Mr. Norheim, Norway)

The draft resolution on this issue, A/C.1/45/L.47, just introduced by the Ambassador of Sweden and sponsored by my country among others, emphasizes that article 8 of the Convention deals with the question of amendments or new protocols. Norway would like to stress that, if a conference of that kind is to be convened, the issue should be subject to broad consultation between the countries concerned: this applies to reviewing the scope and operation of the Convention, as well as to any new categories of weapons which one might wish to include.

In conclusion, the Norwegian delegation would like to urge countries that have not yet done so to become parties to the Convention and its Protocols. The aim should clearly be universal adherence.

Mr. COLLINS (Ireland): My delegation, in co-sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47, introduced by the Ambassador of Sweden, stresses its support for the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. The rules embodied in the Convention and its Protocols represent a significant step, albeit a limited one, in the development of humanitarian law intended to protect civilians and reduce the suffering of victims of armed conflict. As this year marks the tenth anniversary of the United Nations "inhumane weapons" Conference, which agreed the Convention and its Protocols, we are pleased to note that the number of States parties to the Convention continues to increase.

By regulating the use of certain conventional weapons in certain circumstances, the Convention gives humanitarian considerations precedence over military requirements. However, it is not a comprehensive agreement; in this context I would recall that, at the outset of the "inhumane weapons" Conference, the Irish delegation called for a total prohibition on the use of particularly cruel or indiscriminate weapons. We have also taken note of the suggestions which

(Mr. Collins, Ireland)

have been made at various times for the provisions of the Convention to be extended to cover additional categories of weapons.

Ireland has long supported the idea of establishing a consultative committee of experts to investigate alleged violations of the Protocols. Such a measure, which would serve to increase the trust and confidence of States parties to the Convention, could help to strengthen it and to promote universal adherence to it. We note the possibility laid down in article 8 of the Convention for renewing the scope and operation of the Convention and its Protocols, and for setting further international standards relating to other categories of conventional weapons not already covered.

In commending this draft resolution to the Committee, I would like to express the hope that, as has been the practice in the past, the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): The representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hyltenius, referred in his introduction of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.47 to the fact that the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects was adopted by a United Nations conference in Geneva 10 years ago. The Netherlands would like to join Sweden, France, Norway and Ireland in supporting the Convention, as expressed in the draft resolution.

The Netherlands has traditionally supported the goals and objectives of the Convention; we therefore express the hope that the Convention will, in the near future, command universal adherence. We urge States Members of the United Nations which have not yet done so to exert their best endeavours to become parties to the

(Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

Convention and the Protocols annexed thereto, as soon as possible. In its operative paragraph 3, the draft resolution in A/C.1/45/L.47 also urges States to do so.

The Netherlands believes that the widest possible adherence to the Convention would add to its authority. It is in this light that the Netherlands would welcome the convening of a review conference on the Convention in the future. The review conference should also be geared to focusing the attention of States which are not yet parties on the Convention and its merits. This should not be too difficult, as States which are not parties to the Convention could participate in a future review conference as observers.

The Netherlands expects that the General Assembly will pay particular attention at its forty-sixth session, when the subject will again be discussed, to the possibility of a review conference in the near future; that would set in motion a process which, through practical steps along the road towards universality of adherence, would benefit all States.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.25 and A/C.1/45/L.24.

Mr. CHADHA (India): I have asked to speak to introduce two draft resolutions. The first, entitled "Convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons", is contained in document A/C.1/45/L.25 and has been sponsored by Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yugoslavia and India.

The rationale behind the draft resolution is simple and clearly stated in the preamble. It is accepted that the existence and use of nuclear weapons pose a threat to life on this planet. It is also accepted that the nuclear-arms race only serves to increase the risk of the use of nuclear weapons. The "nuclear winter" studies by R. Turco, O. Toon, T. Ackerman, J. Pollack and C. Sagan (the TTAPS group), by the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment of the International Council of Scientific Unions, and in 1988 by the Secretary-General's Group of Experts have all concluded that the use of nuclear weapons, even on a limited scale of 1 per cent of the existing megatonnage, would produce "irreversible consequences" for life on this planet. I quote further from the study by the Secretary-General's Group of Experts on the Climatic and Other Global Effects of Nuclear War:

> "Scientific evidence is now conclusive that a major nuclear war would entail the high risk of a global environmental disruption. ... Three-dimensional atmospheric circulation models with detailed representations of physical processes indicate regional episodes of sub-freezing temperatures, even in summer. ...

(Mr. Chadha, India)

"Beyond one month, agricultural production and the survival of natural ecosystems would be threatened by a considerable reduction in sunlight, temperature depressions of several degrees below normal and suppression of precipitation and summer monsoons. In addition, these effects would be aggravated by chemical pollutants, an increase in ultraviolet radiation associated with depletion of ozone and the likely persistence of radioactive 'hotspots'.

"... The widespread impact of nuclear exchange on climate would constitute a severe threat to world food production. The prospect of widespread starvation as a consequence of a nuclear war would confront both targeted and non-targeted nations. ... The direct effects of a major nuclear exchange could kill hundreds of millions: the indirect effect could kill billions.

"The socio-economic consequences in a world intimately interconnected economically, socially and environmentally would be grave. The functions of production, distribution and consumption in existing socio-economic systems would be completely disrupted." (A/43/351, annex, paras. 22-25)

Those are only some of the irreversible consequences of a nuclear war.

The Conference on Disarmament at Geneva, the single multilateral negotiating forum in which all nuclear-weapon States are represented, has been repeatedly requested by the General Assembly to undertake negotiations with the objective of concluding a convention that would prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, we have submitted our draft convention to the Conference on Disarmament for its consideration. It is therefore a matter of great regret that the Conference on Disarmament has not been able to register any progress on that priority item.

(Mr. Chadha, India)

At the same time, no logical reasons have been put forward as to why such a convention should not be negotiated. To relate the urgency of preventing nuclear war with preventing all wars is to deny the special menace that nuclear weapons pose to mankind. We must, of course, entirely rule out any kind of war as a possible option. I reiterate, however, that while conventional wars may escalate into nuclear war, and while that fateful transition can be prevented, a nuclear war cannot de-escalate into a conventional war. We are resubmitting our draft resolution to underline the importance of that issue and in the hope that the First Committee will be able to bring the might of its moral authority to bear on the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on that item.

The draft convention is contained in the annex to the draft resolution. It is based on the recognition by this forum that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and contrary to the laws of humanity. That was accepted almost three decades ago in General Assembly resolution 1653 (XVI) in 1961.

The world community has since welcomed the statement by the United States and the Soviet Union that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must not be fought". Our draft resolution seeks to transform that understanding into a legally binding commitment. Such a prohibition in the form of a legal agreement would help bring about a qualitative change in security doctrines and policies and create the right climate for negotiations leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

On behalf of the delegations of Afghanistan, Bolivia, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Hungary, Indonesia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Venezuela and my own delegation, I should now like to introduce a draft resolution entitled "Scientific and technological developments and their impact on international security", contained in document A/C.1/45/L.24.

(Mr. Chadha, India)

At the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the threat posed to international peace and security by the growing arms race was acknowledged by the world community. It was agreed that, along with quantitative measures, qualitative measures in the field of disarmament also needed to be negotiated if the arms race was to be halted. More than a decade has passed since the adoption of the Final Document, a decade in which qualitative aspects of the arms race have not received the attention they deserved. That concern was reflected in our initiative at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and in the 1988 General Assembly resolution 43/77 A, in which the Secretary-General was requested:

> "to follow future scientific and technological developments, especially those which have potential military applications, and to evaluate their impact on international security".

(Mr. Chadha, India)

In the report of the Secretary-General on this subject, it is made clear that "in some respects modern technological advances may be hindering rather than helping the pursuit of international security." (A/45/568, p. 3)

The report identifies five broad fields in which scientific and technological developments should be followed: nuclear technology, space technology, materials technology, information technology and biotechnology. The cumulative impact of individual developments in these five fields could substantively transform the security environment. Taking into account the illustrative set of criteria elaborated in it, the report suggests that the international community needs to be better equipped to follow the nature and direction of technological change and that, in this regard, the United Nations can serve as a catalyst and a clearing-house of ideas.

The Conference on the peace and security implications of new trends in science and technology, which was held in April 1990 in Sendai, Japan, saw a convergence of views favouring the goal of more active and effective multilateral collaboration in the area of technology assessment - in which the United Nations should play a leading role - the purpose of which would be to improve predictability and foster greater public awareness. It was also recognized that it is necessary for the scientific and policy communities to work together in dealing from a truly global perspective with the complex implications of technological change. The Secretary-General has therefore been requested to continue to follow these developments and to suggest to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session a framework for their assessment.

It is interesting to speculate whether the security environment would not be better and safer today if attempts by some scientists of the highest stature had resulted in the creation of a shared awareness against the development of many of the technologies, with their attendant military applications, with which we are

(Mr. Chadha, India)

burdened today. Tomorrow's weapons will be more subtle, more threatening and less verifiable, and will give us shorter response times. The impact of some of these can already be seen in the areas dealt with in the report, and many others can be perceived dimly at present. However, it is sobering to realize that all weapon technologies and systems begin with the postulating of an idea; unrestrained human ingenuity does the rest.

Only watchfulness and collective action can restrain trends that undermine global security. We have a common future and must demonstrate a common determination to give science and technology a human face. The challenges of eradicating hunger, poverty and disease and of solving the problems of global warming, ozone depletion and environment management - all of which have acquired a global dimension - require inventiveness on our part and international co-operation on an unprecendented scale. Scientific and technological development must continue, but should be oriented entirely in favour of peaceful uses, for the benefit of mankind.

My delegation and the others on whose behalf we are introducing this draft resolution hope that these proposals will receive the serious consideration and universal support of the Committee that they deserve.

Mr. HOU Zhitong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): In my statement today I wish to outline the Chinese delegation's position of principle on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Ever since the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" has remained high on our agenda. In resolution 44/112, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, the Assembly reaffirms the importance and urgency of this question and urges the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess major space capabilities, to intensify their bilateral negotiations with a view to reaching

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

early agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It also requests the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate, as a matter of priority, an agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

Thanks to the concerted efforts of the people of the world, progress has been made in recent years, and is still being made, in certain areas of disarmament. We certainly welcome these positive developments. At the same time, however, it should be pointed out that in the important area of the prevention of an arms race in outer space the required progress has eluded us. It is disappointing that even the two super-Powers, which possess the greatest space capabilities, have to admit that so far their bilateral negotiations on space issues have failed to make headway and that their agenda has always been confined to discussion of the relationship between offensive and defensive capabilities, instead of being directed towards reaching agreement on the prohibition of space weapons.

Meanwhile, research on and development of space weapons has led to a qualitative escalation of the arms race. This situation has not only had a negative impact on multilateral efforts in the Conference on Disarmament but also prevented that body's Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space from conducting genuine and substantive negotiations on this question. This serious state of affairs cannot but arouse concern and anxiety in the international community.

In this context, the declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade - a declaration formulated by the United Nations Disarmament Commission for adoption by the General Assembly at its current session - reiterates once again that

> "The prevention of an arms race in outer space remains an important area to be further addressed." (A/45/42, p. 27)

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

The international community believes that the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to which China has always accorded great importance, has become a new priority item in the field of disarmament. To give an impetus to the First Committee's consideration of this issue, the Chinese delegation has for the past few years submitted relevant draft resolutions.

China has always been committed to promotion of the early attainment of the objective of preventing an arms race in outer space. We are of the view that effective measures should be taken to ban all types of space weapons - anti-missile and anti-satellite weapons included - so as to bring about the deweaponization of outer space. Meanwhile, it is also imperative that the use or threat of force as well as any other hostile activities in outer space, whether directed from the Earth against outer space or from outer space against the Earth, be prohibited.

It needs to be emphasized that the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of space weapons represents the most fundamental and effective means of preventing an arms race in outer space. We share with the international community the firm expectation that the countries with the greatest space capabilities will fully discharge their special responsibility to prevent an arms race in outer space, speed up in earnest their bilateral negotiations to this end and conclude an agreement at an early date with a view to cessation of the development and deployment of space weapons and the destruction of all such weapons now in existence.

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

As the arms race in outer space endangers international peace and security, the elimination of this danger requires the concerted efforts of all countries. For that reason, China maintains that the Conference on Disarmament and its Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space should, without delay, hold substantive negotiations on an agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, to prohibit and destroy all space weapons and to ensure the deweaponization of outer space.

In keeping with this position, the Chinese delegation will actively participate in the relevant deliberations and negotiations in the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament and other disarmament bodies and forums. We will, as always, join other delegations in contributing to the realization of the objectives of preventing an arms race in outer space and of using outer space for peaceful purposes.

Over the past few years the Chinese delegation, along with the group of non-aligned members and other parties concerned, has been committed to the adoption by this Committee of a single resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space as an emphatic expression of the international community's common aspiration, demand and proposition on this important question. The Chinese delegation appreciates the efforts made and the co-operative attitude displayed by all the parties concerned in this regard.

This year my delegation is ready to continue its contribution to this end. We have noted with pleasure that in the consultations concerning the draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space smooth progress has been made and good results have been achieved under the guidance of Ambassador W. Rasaputram. The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/45/L.17 upholds the correct main thrust of resolution A/44/112, adopted last year, and reflects in a fairly

(Mr. Hou Zhitong, China)

balanced and comprehensive manner the common understanding reached by the international community on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. While reiterating its principled position and propositions, the Chinese delegation believes that the fundamental objective and orientation of the present draft are basically in line with ours. Therefore, the Chinese delegation supports, and has joined in sponsoring, this draft resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is the representative of Mexico, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.29.

Mr. HERNANDEZ BASAVE (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): The present state of international relations undoubtedly offers the best prospects to date for making headway in the process of disarmament and arms control. The arms reduction agreements entered into by the two super-Powers in recent years have contributed greatly to improving the international political situation.

For this reason, it is more important than ever that the United Nations should not be left behind in the area of disarmament. Multilateral efforts within the Organization can benefit significantly from well-informed world public opinion. It is particularly important at this stage that civil servants, the mass media, non-governmental organizations, educational communities and research institutes, as well as elected officials, should know, understand and support the work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

That is why the main goals of the World Disarmament Campaign, which was solemnly launched by the General Assembly on 7 June 1982, are to inform and educate the public and to ensure that the public understands and supports the goals of the United Nations in the field of disarmament and arms control. Ever since it was launched the Campaign has focused its activities on the organization of regional conferences and meetings, a broad programme of publications and the holding of

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

special events, such as Disarmament Week, which always begins on 24 October, United Nations Day.

The speed at which international relations are changing makes it imperative that we have balanced and objective information on the vast possibilities offered by the United Nations for consolidating a system of international security based on mutual trust and for making progress in a true process of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

That is why draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.29, on the World Disarmament Campaign - which I have the honour to introduce under agenda item 57 (a), on behalf of my delegation and the delegations of Bangladesh, Bolivia, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Egypt, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Venezuela and Yugoslavia - contains a recommendation that the Campaign focus its efforts even more on specific activities that will contribute to fostering an informed debate on arms limitation, disarmament and security, as set out in paragraph 4.

According to the draft resolution the General Assembly would welcome the report of the Secretary-General on the Campaign and the assessment of its achievements and shortcomings. The report states that the main obstacle facing the Campaign as it seeks to attain its objectives is its weak financial base. To overcome that problem, all Member States are invited, in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, to contribute to the World Disarmament Campaign Voluntary Trust Fund. In paragraph 6 the General Assembly would decide that at the forty-sixth session there should be a ninth United Nations Pledging Conference, and would also express the hope that all Member States that had not yet done so would announce voluntary contributions.

(Mr. Hernandez Basave, Mexico)

The text of the draft resolution contains some new elements and omits others that in the past have caused concern to some delegations. The sponsors of the draft resolution trust that the Committee will approve the text without a vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee, who wishes to make an announcement.

Mr. KHERADI (Secretary of the Committee): I wish to inform the Committee that Costa Rica has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.21/Rev.1; Singapore has become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/45/L.53; and the United Republic of Tanzania has become a sponsor of draft resolutions A/C.1/45/L.22 and L.23.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: At the 19th meeting of the Committee, on 26 October, I drew attention to the text of a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, which has been officially circulated as document A/C.1/45/6. It concerns the request to the Main Committees of the General Assembly, including the First Committee, to communicate their views to the Fifth Committee on the relevant programmes of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992 to 1997.

At that meeting I requested that those members that wished to express their views on the subject-matter should transmit their comments to me in writing by Monday, 5 November, so that I could forward them to the Fifth Committee as requested.

Since I have received no comments from delegations on the subject, may I take it that the Committee authorizes me to inform the Chairman of the Fifth Committee that the First Committee has considered the issue and that it has no comments to make on the subject?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.